

From: Brien Brennan (mailto:brien.b.b@gmail.com)
Sent: Wednesday, April 12, 2017 8:39 PM
To: Rogers, Pat@DeltaCouncil <pat.rogers@deltacouncil.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comments for Delta Plan Amendment, 4/28/17 Board Meeting

Dear Delta Stewardship Council,

I'm writing in opposition to the proposed Delta Tunnels. I live on the South Fork of Elder Creek, a tributary to the Sacramento River, and hence connected to the Delta.

The Delta, when Europeans arrived, was one of the most magnificent places on Earth, with wildlife comparable to the famous African Serengeti. For more than 160 years, the life that is the Delta has been treated with indifference, and a human from 1800 would barely recognize the place today. Theoretically all the changes have been for the project called "progress." But that project has a global history that shows forests precede us and deserts are left in our wake. Civilization may have created a lot of convenience for many humans, but by undermining our biological foundation, it also has created vast wastelands. California is on track to be one. Just think, Syria, Lebanon, Iran, Iraq, the Aral Sea, Pakista

n, etc. all were fecund lands of forests and oak savannas prior to irrigation agriculture. Look at them now, dependent on other lands being destroyed so that they can eat. Will California be the next great wasteland?

As the Delta Stewardship Council, you are supposed to be the stewards of the Delta. This is a duty of great importance. I hope you are honored to be in such a position. And I hope you reflect on the histories I've just reminded you of when you vote on this insane Tunnels project.

Insane? Yes, here's why:

1) As my home is connected to the Delta via the Sacramento River, and as someone who has been observing the decline in this region's natural waterways for the last 13 years, I know that removing (extracting) water that should be headed to the Delta means that there is simply less water in the north state. Desertification is caused by aridity, and pumping water out of the natural cycle is a fast-track to desert. I'd rather live without electricity than see the Sacramento Valley become a desert. This is the kind of thinking we need people in powerful places to have. Please start with yourselves!

2) The Delta Tunnels cannot improve water supply reliability because there are no longer any guarantees of water deliveries as part of the project — water contractors will be going through the same water availability processes in the future with the State Water Resources Control Board to fill the tunnels as they do now. California needs to acknowledge the over subscription of the water system, and start a true accounting that determines how much water is really available.

- Water exports of safe yields should only happen during wet periods, not dry periods.
- Investments need to be made to retire drainage-impaired agricultural lands in the Central Valley.

Instead of destroying the Delta to feed the water demands of billionaires' mega-farms and desert developments,

please help

end the myth of "surplus" water.

Much of Delta water goes to dry, polluted

ag

land that drains

chemical runoff

into rivers. Retiring these lands would save hundreds of thousands of acre-feet per year in water. We could do this by buying out these farms and helping their owners convert the land to

carbon storing oak woodlands

. Rather than planting water dependent permanent crops, let's return to the requirement that field crops dependent on Delta "surplus" water are left uncultivated during dry periods. It makes no sense to jeopardize farming on prime Delta farmland and surrounding areas to

subsidize irrigation of impaired lands on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley that by the nature of being irrigated pollute vast quantities of ground and surface water.

3

) I'm opposed to the levees, as they are part of the great undermining of ecological integrity for the region, but if you want to keep them, t
he levees will need rehabilitation even if the California Water Fix Delta tunnels were built, as there is \$20 billion in infrastructure (railroads, gas lines, power facilities, public highways), and 4 million people in the Delta who need protection. Recent studies by the Delta Protection Commission indicate that if a hypothetical catastrophe were to occur, 80% of the cost and 100% of the loss of life would occur within the Delta. Hypothetical? Has anyone read the climate projections recently? The Delta will be part of an inland sea by 2100. Why not prepare for that instead of building infrastructure that will just get inundated?

4) Water that flows to the ocean is not wasted. It is what gives life to fisheries that support the ocean food web. Fresh water flows are critical to the survival of this state's salmon fishery, as salmon migrate from the estuary's watersheds, through the bay to the sea, and also help to flush out pollutants.

The State Water Board and State and Federal fishery agencies have repeatedly stated that Delta outflows must be significantly increased if the estuary's historic fisheries are going to survive.

Extra water can be exported through the existing pumps if state-of-art fish screens are installed by the water takers as promised. Further studies could be conducted to see if reconfiguring the existing pumps at their current location, or another location that allows fresh water to flow through the Delta, would provide benefits to fisheries.

5) I could go on, but you get the point, I hope!

Sincerely,
Brien Brennan
Red Bluff, CA